



DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

~~SECRET~~**SPOT COMMENTARY**15 February 1991
1045 EST**IRAQ-KUWAIT: SITUATION REPORT #572****Saddam's Cease-Fire Bid Less Than Meets the Eye**

Iraq's announced willingness to accept a cease-fire and UNSC resolution 660, which calls for an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, appears to be an effort by Saddam Husayn to shift the battle from a shooting war to the political and propaganda arenas. The statement issued this morning by Iraq's ruling Revolutionary Command Council announces only Iraq's "readiness to deal with" UN Resolution 660 and links Iraqi cooperation to issues demanded by Saddam since his August invasion. These include a guarantee of Iraq's "historical rights" in the region, the withdrawal of allied forces from the Gulf within a month, complete Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories, and an end to the UN-imposed trade embargo. Iraq added new demands as well, including cancellation of all other UN resolutions against Iraq, the removal of military equipment supplied to Israel since the war began, reparations for war damage, and the cancellation of all debts. In addition, Baghdad wants the removal of all foreign forces and bases from the Gulf.

Comment: Saddam Husayn is not offering a unilateral, unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait. He is probably trying to postpone the beginning of the ground war and exploit Soviet and Iranian willingness to broker a ceasefire. By outlining his maximum demands, he probably hopes to set the terms of the diplomatic debate and exploit any propaganda advantage that he believes he gained from the civilian deaths in the bunker bombing. Saddam almost certainly hopes the move will garner international support for what he hopes will be the beginning of the negotiation process, especially among the Arabs.

Conditions inside Iraq may also be pushing Saddam to seek a halt to the military campaign. Iraqi leaders have admitted publicly that the bombing has done extensive damage to Iraq's military and economic infrastructure. Groundwork for this announcement may have been laid earlier this week when Saddam and the Iraqi press claimed that Iraq had already won a moral victory. Iraqi leaders may be worried about the high number of military casualties and increasing numbers of

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military desertions from the front. Baghdad may also be aware of rumors of dissatisfaction among senior Republican Guard commanders. Senior advisers may be cautioning him that his belligerence risks unrest in Iraq. Saddam's next moves may come during Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz's trip to Moscow Monday. Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati is also scheduled to visit Moscow soon.

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